

1. Purpose

- A. The purpose of this policy is to verify that the entity seeking academy certification is eligible for academy certification and has developed policies and procedures sufficient to comply with all certification standards pertaining to administration, personnel and instruction. In addition, all physical facilities must comply with certification standards. Obviously, during the initial certification process, it is impossible to determine how well the policies and procedures are being followed. Newly certified academies are, however, subject to scheduled and unscheduled visits by field coordinators and other members of the Division of Operations in which adherence to certification standards will be evaluated. Academy certification is valid for one year. Academy certification expires on June 30th of the year after the academy was certified. In order to maintain certified status an academy must successfully complete the recertification process prior to the expiration date.

2. Academy Certification Eligibility

- A. To become a certified academy, a state or local unit of government must demonstrate a need which contains the following elements:

1. The inability to obtain adequate training from existing academies or a sufficient hardship which renders the use of other existing academies impractical.
2. Based upon a training needs assessment, a sufficient number of officers to warrant the establishment of a full-time training function for a minimum of five years.

- B. In addition, the state or local unit of government must make the following commitments:

1. Provide a full range of training to include entry-level training, in-service training, instructor certification and recertification training and specialized training.
2. Assignment of one position with primary responsibility as academy director and one clerical position to support training and training related functions.
3. Maintain a training facility adequate to conduct training in accordance with academy certification standards.
4. Commitment of sufficient funding to adequately support the training function.

- C. Process to Determine Eligibility:

1. The state or local governmental unit shall submit a justification, as outlined in § B above, to the Committee on Training which shall review the justification and make a recommendation to the department as to whether or not the establishment of an academy is warranted.
2. If the Committee on Training recommends the establishment of the proposed academy, the department shall make a determination as to whether or not the establishment of the academy is warranted.
3. If the establishment of the academy is approved by the department, the proposed academy must successfully complete the academy certification process.

D. Academy Certification Process

1. The DCJS field services coordinator will provide guidance and assistance to the prospective academy by identifying the requirements for certification, analyzing the adequacy of existing facilities and providing an estimate of what needs to be accomplished prior to formally requesting academy certification status.
2. A staff member of the Division of Operations will establish a mutually agreeable date for an on-site inspection with the academy director and conduct the on-site assessment for academy certification.
3. An academy which has been certified is subject to scheduled and unscheduled visits by the field coordinator and other members of the Division of Operations to check items required for continued certification.
4. If at any time it is determined that the certified academy does not meet one or more certification standards, the academy will be given a reasonable amount of time to correct the situation, not to exceed 60 days. The director of the academy will receive written notification of the standards which have not been met and the date when a reassessment will be conducted.
5. A staff member of the Division of Operations will conduct the reassessment. If one or more of the standards still have not been met, the Chief, Sheriff, Agency Administrator or Board Chairman of the academy will be notified in writing that upon reassessment the standard has not been met. The academy will have a maximum of 30 days to comply with all certification standards.
6. A staff member of the Division of Operations will conduct the second reassessment. If the academy is still not in compliance with all certification standards at the time of the second reassessment, the matter will be referred to the Academy Certification Committee. The committee will review the findings of the second reassessment in which the academy was not in compliance with all certification standards and make a recommendation to the Committee On Training of the Criminal Justice Services Board.
7. The Committee on Training will review the recommendation of the Academy Certification Committee, giving both the academy and the Academy Certification Committee an opportunity to make a verbal presentation, and, based upon all pertinent information, recommend appropriate action to the Department of Criminal Justice Services.
8. Certification is valid for one year from the date of certification. Academy certification expires on June 30th. In order to maintain certification status, an academy must successfully complete a recertification process prior to the expiration of the original certification. The recertification will extend the expiration date for three years.

3. Academy certification standards

A. Definitions

1. Academy: a facility in which training programs are conducted. It houses classrooms and offices for instructors and staff. Other facilities such as a firing range, driver training track, multipurpose training areas, library and satellite locations are considered to be part of such facility but need not be located at the same site.
2. Academy Director: an individual designated by the chief, sheriff, agency administrator or academy board who is responsible for the conduct and operation of training conducted by the academy.

3. Assistant Director: an individual predesignated by the director of the academy responsible for the conduct and operation of training in the absence of the director. In the event the designated individual is not an employee of the academy/agency, prior approval for such designation must be obtained from the chief, sheriff, or agency administrator.
4. Directive: a written statement of policy procedure or rule/regulation addressing each respective area in the certification standards, duly approved and signed by the academy's governing authority and made a part of a manual available for inspection and guidance in the operation of the academy.
5. Satellite Facility: a facility, located away from the certified academy facility, which the certified academy uses to conduct mandated training. This definition specifically excludes firing ranges, driver training sites and physical fitness or defensive tactics sites which may be located away from the certified academy facility. Commercial conference and training facilities such as hotels and motels, which are used for mandated training, are specifically excluded from this definition.
6. Academy Certification Committee: The Academy Certification Committee reviews the certification and recertification standards and recommends changes as necessary to the Division of Operations. This committee also reviews the circumstances and facts surrounding the non-compliance with certification standards by any certified academy in order to make a recommendation to the Committee on Training of the Criminal Justice Services Board. This committee is composed of five members who represent a regional academy, a sheriff's academy, an independent academy and a state agency academy. The fifth member is an at-large member representing all types of academies. Committee members are selected by mutual agreement between DCJS and the President of the Training Directors Association.

B. Administration standards

1. An academy shall be governed by the chief of police, sheriff or agency administrator or in the case of an academy providing services for several political subdivisions, a governing board shall be composed at a minimum of criminal justice executives of participating jurisdictions.
2. A written directive shall identify the goals and objectives of the academy.
 - a. A three-year plan, updated annually, shall be available.
 - (1) The three year plan shall be approved and signed by the agency administrator, or in the case of regional academies, approved by the Academy Board Chairman and distributed to all members of the executive/governing board of the academy.
 - (a) There shall be a process which allows all participating agencies to address questions and concerns regarding the three year plan.
 - (b) The three year plan should address the following areas as they apply to the academy:
 - (i) Administration
 - (ii) Personnel
 - (iii) Staff Training
 - (iv) Programs

- (v) Equipment
 - (vi) Facility enhancement
3. A written directive shall establish the academy's administrative functions.
 - a. The directive shall include the academy's authority and responsibility to primarily train criminal justice practitioners.
 - b. The directive shall include the academy's organizational structure.
 - c. The directive shall include the academy's training activities and functions.
 - d. The directive shall outline the budgetary process for training, its cost, and sources of income.
 4. A written directive governing student attendance shall be available.
 - a. Shall include procedures for documenting attendance.
 - b. Shall define eligible absences from training and the permissible length of such absences.
 - c. Shall document procedures for attending and/or completing any training missed due to absence.
 5. A written directive shall explain under what conditions training will be provided for outside agencies/non-members.
 - a. Shall include the cost of such training.
 6. A written directive shall establish procedures for testing and re-testing of students, if applicable
 - a. Shall include established pass/fail criteria
 - b. Shall include guidelines on the development and format of testing (i.e., types of questions such as multiple choice, true or false, fill in the blank and essay).
 - c. Shall include circumstances and timetables for re-testing, remedial training, and dismissal from the academy.
 7. Academies shall maintain a training record/file on each student attending the academy. This file shall include records pertaining to that student while attending that academy sufficient to document that all performance objectives have been successfully completed.
 8. Academies shall maintain an administrative file that pertains to each class it conducts. This file shall include curriculum/ schedule, attendance records, discipline records, counseling records, test-answer sheets, and course evaluation or summary. This file may be combined with the training record/file on each student file specified above at the discretion of the academy.
 9. Academies shall have a policy covering records maintenance and a retention/destruction schedule approved by the state library. (NOTE: The current policy of the Virginia State Library and Archives is that training records may be destroyed after three years. The Department of Criminal Justice Services does not accept responsibility for the destruction or

retention of records. That decision is the sole responsibility of the academy. The Department of Criminal Justice Services will continue efforts to support academies and agencies by providing training records for official purposes, when necessary. It is not the role of DCJS to act as a records repository for individuals seeking information for their own personal reasons. As the originator of training records, the academy should provide such information. Therefore, we strongly encourage all academies to maintain at least minimal training records which would satisfy most requests from individuals. If an academy cannot comply with a particular request, the requesting individual should be advised that DCJS may be able to provide information but that a fee shall be required and that it may take up to 120 days to receive a response. In addition, academies should encourage all individuals to maintain their own training records throughout their criminal justice career...)

10. A written directive shall establish safety rules for skill training (firearms, defensive tactics and driver training) and practical exercises.
 - a. Directive shall be distributed at the beginning of the school to all students.
11. A written directive shall establish a policy governing student dress.
12. A written directive shall establish a policy on student conduct.
 - a. The policy shall detail circumstances under which students can be expelled or suspended.
 - b. The policy shall detail circumstances under which students can be re-admitted.
13. Academies shall have a policy for post-graduation evaluation of entry-level training.
 - a. Shall occur from six months to one year after leaving the academy.
 - b. Shall assess the job-relatedness of entry-level training.
14. Academies shall have documented evidence of general and professional liability insurance coverage.
15. Academies shall have a policy for insuring the physical fitness of students assigned for entry-level training.
 - a. Shall include a procedure for ensuring that agency medical personnel performing physical examinations are aware of the rigors of entry-level training.
 - b. Shall have physical performed within twelve months prior to training.
16. Regional academies shall maintain a charter which shall be updated annually.
17. Academies shall have a policy on the minimum and maximum number of students in classes.
 - a. Mandated training will not be scheduled for classes of less than six students nor more than thirty-five.
 - b. Exceptions to this standard may be granted by the Field Services Coordinator in the region where the academy is located. A written request shall be submitted to the Field Services Coordinator and shall specify the reasons why an exception is necessary. The Field Services Coordinator shall evaluate the request to determine if sufficient cause exists

to grant an exception. If an exception is granted, the Field Services Coordinator will document the exception in writing to the academy director and forward a copy to the Director of the Division of Operations. For large academies which have suitable facilities and sufficient staff to routinely conduct classes of more than thirty five students, and ongoing exception may be granted.

18. Academies shall comply with all administrative procedures set forth in applicable rules promulgated by the Criminal Justice Services Board.

C. Personnel Standards

1. Each academy shall have a minimum number of staff available for the duration of any mandated training course. These shall include but not be limited to:
 - a. An academy director or designee.
 - b. One clerical support person. In the case of satellite training locations, this individual need only be at the main academy facility.
2. There shall be written position descriptions for each staff position including:
 - a. Selection and Retention Criteria
 - b. Performance Standards
 - c. Pay Scales and Benefits
3. Academies shall have written standards of conduct and disciplinary procedures for staff.

D. Facility Standards

1. Academies shall have classrooms and offices for staff physically present at the academy. Other facilities such as firing range, driver training track, multipurpose training areas, library and satellite facilities are considered to be part of such a facility but need not be located at the same site.
 - a. All satellite facilities shall conform to the standards contained in this section.
2. Academies shall be inspected by appropriate local and/or state authorities to ensure compliance with fire, health and building regulations. Copies of inspections shall be maintained and furnished upon request.
3. Classrooms used for lecture-type training shall provide a minimum of 20 square feet of floor space per student. Such classrooms shall have a posted occupancy based upon this standard.
 - a. Shall be equipped with an adult-size desk and chair or chair/table combination.
 - b. Shall have overhead lighting measuring no less than 50 foot candles at desk level.
 - c. Windows shall have shades or blinds capable of reducing ambient light for viewing of visual aids.

4. Separate rest room facilities for males and females shall be provided.
5. Academies shall have designated areas for performance testing.
6. Academies shall have office space for employees.
 - a. Shall have space designated for use by adjunct instructors which shall include a desk and chair.
7. There shall be storage space for equipment and materials.
8. Shall have the following instructional aids:
 - a. Chalkboard/dry erase board (minimum 10 sq. ft.)
 - b. Projection screen (min. 10 sq. ft.)
 - c. Overhead projector
 - d. Videotape recorder/player
9. Shall have slides, transparencies, videotapes and other audio-visual aids suitable to supplement instruction.
10. Where applicable, shall have scheduled access to driver training facility which shall include:
 - a. Vehicle maintenance facility (on or off site)
 - b. Insurance for users
 - c. Adequate for courses prescribed by regulation
 - d. Skid pan, if applicable
11. Shall have scheduled access to firing range which shall include:
 - a. Shotgun/tear gas capabilities
 - b. Adequate for courses prescribed in Department of Criminal Justice Services
 - c. Insurance for users
 - d. Adequate storage facility for ammunition at the academy or range. Facility should have posted signs in accordance with law and should be protected from illegal entry and fire.
12. Ranges shall have at least 5 firing points if used for basic training.
13. Academies shall be adequately equipped with first-aid equipment.

14. Academies shall be equipped with a telephone. Communications shall be available at all training sites.
15. Academies shall have a library which provides a representative sample of resources for subjects taught and also includes current applicable sections of the Code of Virginia, background and supplementary reading material representing varying viewpoints, and procedures to allow availability of materials to students and faculty.
16. Regional academies shall develop a housing policy applicable to students who must travel significant distances to attend classes.

E. Instruction Standards

1. The academy shall have a model curriculum for all entry-level and instructor training conducted. Such model curriculum shall contain the subject matter to be instructed, and where appropriate the designated performance objectives and times of instruction. In addition, all related material such as the memorandum of transmittal to the field coordinator, a copy of the training curriculum as actually conducted and a completed Form 41 Training Roster shall be available.
2. The academy shall maintain documentation for all in-service and instructor recertification training sessions conducted consisting of a memorandum listing session type, location and dates; a copy of the final curriculum and a Form 41 Training Roster.
3. The academy shall require lesson plans for all training courses.
 - a. Shall include a format for lesson plan development.
 - b. Shall include a statement of performance objectives, references, resources, a detailed outline of the course content, instructional aids required, and any testing/ evaluation instruments.
4. In the case of courses taught by contracted consultants or other outside instructors, only a course syllabus will be required.
5. A written directive shall specify the approval process for lesson plans.
 - a. Lesson plans shall be updated on an annual basis.
 - b. Lesson plans shall be on file at the academy.
6. All instructors must meet minimum standards established by Department of Criminal Justice Services.
7. The Academy shall establish quality control methods for ensuring adequate instruction. All of the items listed below shall be documented in writing.
 - a. Written student evaluations of instructors.
 - b. Periodic and random monitoring of instruction provided to ensure that:
 - (1) Lesson plans are being used.

(2) Appropriate audio-visual aids are available and used properly.

(3) The instructor is holding student attention.

(4) The instructor is in control of the students.

(5) The instructor is addressing the objectives.

(6) Classroom conditions such as lighting, noise levels and temperature are acceptable.

c. Appropriate action is taken to follow up on any student complaints regarding instructors or the training process.

d. Results of testing are analyzed and evaluated.

8. The academy shall maintain an up-to-date copy of the Reference Manual provided by the Division of Operations.

F. Satellite facility standards

1. A satellite facility is a facility, located away from the certified academy facility, which the certified academy uses to conduct mandated training. This definition specifically excludes firing ranges, driver training sites and physical fitness or defensive tactics sites which may be located away from the certified academy facility. Commercial conference and training facilities such as hotels and motels, which are used for mandated training, are specifically excluded from this definition.

a. All satellite facilities where mandated training is conducted must meet the standards in the facilities portion of this policy.

(1) Satellite facilities must be inspected by the academy to ensure they meet the standards for satellite facilities before any credit can be awarded for mandated training which is conducted in such a facility.

(a) The academy shall complete the Satellite Facility Worksheet for each satellite facility.

(b) The Satellite Facility Worksheet shall be maintained by the academy

(2) The academy shall periodically monitor all satellite facilities, not less than once per calendar year, to ensure that all training conducted conforms to DCJS requirements. The academy shall maintain written reports documenting such monitoring.

